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9 January 1973

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Director's Briefing of the full Senate Armed  
Services Committee - 8 January 1973

1. The Director briefed the full Senate Armed Services Committee on the world situation. The meeting lasted from 1030 hours until 1230 hours. A technical sweep of the room, 212 Old Senate Office Building, was conducted and the room was kept under technical monitoring throughout. Discussions included SI and TKH material. No transcript was taken. A copy of the Director's prepared statement is on file in the Office of Legislative Counsel.

2. Present for all or part of the session were:

John Stennis (D., Miss.), Chairman  
Stuart Symington (D., Mo.)  
Howard W. Cannon (D., Nev.)  
Thomas J. McIntyre (D., N.H.)  
Harry F. Byrd (I., Va.)  
Sam Nunn (D., Ga.)  
Strom Thurmond (R., S.C.)  
John G. Tower (R., Texas)  
Barry Goldwater (R., Ariz.)  
Richard S. Schweiker (R., Pa.)  
William B. Saxbe (R., Ohio)

3. Present from the Committee staff was:

T. Edward Braswell, Chief Counsel

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4. Accompanying the Director were:

Carl Duckett, DDS&T  
Bruce Clarke, D/OSR  
George Carver, SAVA  
John M. Maury, Legislative Counsel

5. The Chairman opened with the comment that he had called the meeting in line with his policy of having a situation briefing from the Agency early in the year. He then remarked that Mr. Helms' performance in the position of DCI had been outstanding in every way, calling attention to the fact that he had made a career of intelligence work. The Chairman then welcomed Senator Nunn, a new member of the Committee.

6. Senator Thurmond remarked that he fully concurred in the Chairman's praise of Mr. Helms.

7. Mr. Helms then delivered from his prepared statement material covering:

- a. Developments in Soviet Strategic Forces
- b. Chinese Military Developments
- c. The Middle East
- d. Vietnam
- e. Laos
- f. Cambodia.

8. During the ensuing discussion the following points were brought out:

- a. The Chairman expressed the view that our experience in Southeast Asia demonstrated the impossibility of the U.S. exercising effective control over the various countries in Indochina.

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b. Senator Symington fully concurred in the Chairman's compliments regarding Mr. Helms, as did Senator Tower.

c. In response to a question by Senator Tower, the Director explained the new Chinese road across northern Laos was not now being used to support the Communist insurgents in Thailand, but there was no doubt the road represented a significant threat in this regard and the Thais were having serious difficulty in coping with the insurgency problem.

d. Senator Cannon complimented Mr. Helms and concurred in the remarks of the Chairman in this respect.

e. Senator Cannon asked how our present assessment of Soviet and Chinese weapons compared with our forecasts of a year ago. The Director said that last year's forecast regarding the Soviet weapons program had proved extremely accurate, and we had also accurately forecast the trend of development regarding Chinese weapons. However, he said that we had been unable last year to identify the early Chinese deployment of these weapons, but they had indeed begun deployment but in such remote areas that we had not initially identified them. He said now the new deployment sites had been identified and confirmed our estimates of the progress of their weapons programs.

f. Senator Schweiker joined in the compliments to Mr. Helms, remarking that his departure from CIA would be not only a great loss to the Agency, but to the Senate Armed Services Committee. He went on to inquire about the North Vietnamese logistics situation in South Vietnam, in reply to which the Director said that as a result of the pipelines, and forward stockpiling, the North Vietnamese were able to maintain their military pressure in the south.

g. Senator McIntyre concurred in the tributes to Mr. Helms and then inquired about the Soviet naval presence in the Bay of Bengal. The Director replied the Soviets are now keeping an average of two or three ships in this area in order to show the flag and make port calls. McIntyre asked if the forty Soviet ships

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the Director referred to in the Mediterranean included the Komar missile launching vessels. The Director said they did. In response to questions by McIntyre, the Director remarked that the new D-class (Stretch Y-class) Soviet submarine would be fitted with the SS-NX-8 missile with a range of 4300 miles. In response to another question, he told McIntyre that we believe the Soviets are working on the development of a MIRV capability.

h. Senator McIntyre commented that Defense was asking for money for a naval cruise missile, and he wanted to know what the Soviets have in this regard. Mr. Duckett explained that the Soviets had such missiles with a range of 250-300 miles, but they were probably defensive, for use against surface vessels. McIntyre remarked that Defense was asking for cruise missiles with a 1,000 mile range.

i. The Chairman remarked that the discussion was covering very sensitive matters and any member planning to use any information provided by the Agency should check first with the Agency.

j. Senator Saxbe paid tribute to Mr. Helms and then asked whether the Laotians or Thais had opposed the Chinese road building in Laos. The Director said there was not much they could do about it. In response to another question by Saxbe, the Director explained current B-52 losses apparently are due to the close formations in which they are required by circumstance to fly, their vulnerability when on their final bomb run, the new Communist radar and the great quantity of surface-to-air missiles being fired at them.

k. Senator Byrd spoke most warmly of Mr. Helms whom he has known for 30 years. He expressed concern about the Communist insurgency in Thailand. The Director said it was not yet a serious threat but the Thai government was apparently not able to stamp it out. In reply to another question by Byrd, the Director said no ships had moved in or out of Haiphong since the mining.

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1. The Director replied to a question by Senator Thurmond, saying there apparently had been no Soviet violations of the SALT agreement to date. In reply to several questions by Thurmond, it was explained that the North Vietnamese had about 150,000 troops in South Vietnam which they refuse to acknowledge and that in addition there were approximately 60,000 Vietcong in South Vietnam. The regular South Vietnamese army numbers about 500,000 and there are perhaps another 500,000 armed personnel of one kind or another in South Vietnamese paramilitary and security units, etc.

m. Senator Nunn asked about the effect of the bombing on North Vietnamese war-making capabilities. The Director explained that the manpower pool was ample and combat stockpiles were adequate for the present, but the bombing was having a major effect on heavy industry and the economy generally. In reply to another question by Nunn, the Director said without U.S. air support it was doubtful whether the South Vietnamese could hold their own against the north but they were making steady progress.

n. Senator Cannon asked why we were bombing Haiphong if there were no ships passing through the mine fields. He was told that the targets are probably stockpiles in the area. Cannon asked if we had recent film showing the bomb damage and was told we did not but some would be available shortly. He said when the pictures were available he would like to see them.

9. Follow up action:

Senator Cannon's request to see photos of bomb damage of Hanoi and Haiphong when available.

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